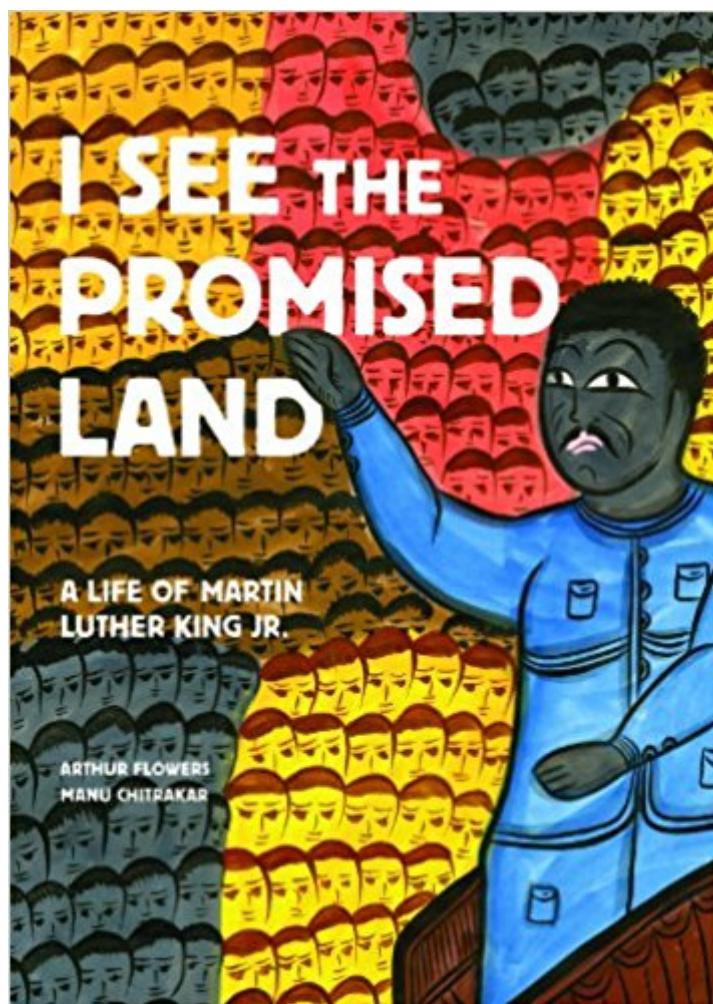


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# I See The Promised Land: A Life Of Martin Luther King Jr.



## Synopsis

This stunning graphic novel biography of Martin Luther King, Jr. describes the apartheid South of his time, which in many ways was not very different from the early days of slavery. Included are descriptions of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the formation of civil rights groups, mass movements against segregation, such as the Albany Movement and the Children's Crusade in Birmingham, and the influence on King of Gandhi, with his nonviolent approach to resistance. Flowers' text smoothly incorporates excerpts from many of King's most moving speeches and concludes with a brief look at his legacy. Flowers tells a masterful story in musical prose, while Manu Chitrakar carries the tale into the vivid idiom of Patua art, turning King's historic journey into a truly universal legacy.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 930L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 156 pages

Publisher: Groundwood Books; Revised ed. edition (January 1, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1554983282

ISBN-13: 978-1554983285

Product Dimensions: 6.6 x 0.9 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #1,217,373 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #62 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Comics & Graphic Novels > Biography #71 in Books > Children's Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Biographies #184 in Books > Teens > Biographies > Cultural Heritage

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 6 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up-Who better to give Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life story the full mythopoeic treatment than the renowned African American novelist and performance poet. Flowers's hyper-vernacular language, swinging rhythms, and conspiratorial first-person tone lend his words a vivacity that is nearly audible. He weaves the entire history of the enslavement of black Americans into King's story, refers to unspecified gods taking an interest in affairs, and comments on King's speeches with impressive

insight. Brilliant and engaging, Flowers's composition should be added to the MLK canon. The art is by a scroll painter from a small village in Bengal, India, who had never heard of Dr. King prior to this project. In some ways, this is a successful pairing. The vivid colors and bold forms of Patua are appropriately emphatic, and the naive style matches Flowers's references to "hoodoo" and his chosen narrative persona, Rickydoc Trickmaster. However, the images are repetitive, and it can be difficult to distinguish individuals. People often appear to be wearing inappropriately peaceful expressions; this, readers are informed in the back matter, is a characteristic of Patua style but might be puzzling for young people. Design also plays an important role. Images are cut into pieces for emphasis, text is artfully placed in blocks that not only enhance readability but also reinforce the counterpoint between narrative and commentary. A colorful and passionate addition to the Martin Luther King, Jr., bookshelf, perhaps best suited to classroom use.-Paula Willey, Baltimore County Public Library, Towson, MD

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**\*Starred Review\*** Both evocative and factually rich, this presentation of the career of Martin Luther King Jr. shows the man on an authentic world stage and as a leader who learned from his travels to both India and Africa. Flowers provides an incisive and succinct text that steadily maintains the propulsive griot narrative style of King's African ancestry: "This what bring King to a vision of black folk as a folk with a destiny. This what move him to the prophetic." Chitrakar's free-floating images, which juxtapose and amplify the text, are deeply steeped in the Patua scroll-painting tradition, from the Bengali faces to the panoply of browns and yellows and pinks that differentiate individuals rather than races. The choice of props and scenery speak more of India than America, and protesters' signs are written in Bengali script rather than English. Rossi's graphic layout intersperses black pages in which King's quotes are set in large white type with bright pages tracing his education as a preacher, his entry into the nascent civil rights fray, and his ascendancy to martyrdom. King's doubts about himself and others, adultery, and relationships with political leaders all receive just due. Older teens, in addition to adults, will find this to be a standout both as a distinctive graphic narrative that combines two world storytelling traditions and as an examination of King's life and its enduring legacy across the globe. --Francisca Goldsmith --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The road away from being a second class citizen is a long one. "I See the Promised Land: A Life of

Martin Luther King Jr." blends two styles of story telling to following the life of Dr. King and what was truly important to his message and over his life time. With a powerful message and style, Arthur Flowers, Manu Chitrakar, and Gugliemo Rossi come together and make "I See the Promised Land" a core addition to any art or biography collection, enthusiastically recommended.

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